

## Staying in School for a Brighter Future



Photo: Alexandra Huddleston

Housewife and new reader Aminata Haidara with her husband and children in Farakola, Mali.

"Learning to read has helped us better appreciate the value of education and to do a better job in managing our school. I used to regularly take my children out of school to help out around the house or in the field. I now prefer them to stay in school."

- Aminata Haidara

Aminata's two girls and four boys are all learning to read and write in a school the community established with the support of USAID. Over the last three years, Aminata has become highly involved in the village's school through a program that gives Aminata and her neighbors in Farako the tools necessary to effectively manage their school — hiring teachers, purchasing learning materials, and monitoring classroom instruction. Measures are taken to assure that the education her children are receiving is appropriate and doesn't run contrary to her religious beliefs.

Aminata and her husband have even learned to read as part of the program. According to Aminata, parental and community involvement is a key aspect of USAID's education program. The program allows parents like Aminata to have a voice in their children's education, providing a trusted alternative to extremist religious schools in the area. Aminata is confident that with an education her kids will find a better life outside of the small town of Farako.